1. (currently amended) A pharmaceutical agent comprising a carrier moiety and a therapeutically active peptide species, wherein the peptide has ~~is in~~ the formula ~~form~~ aa_n, where n is the number of amino acid residues in the peptide and wherein the carrier is a member selected from the group consisting of cinnamoyl, benzoyl, phenylacetyl, 3,4-methylenedioxy-cinnamoyl, 3,4,5-trimethoxycinnamoyl, *t*-butoxycarbonyl, benzyloxycarbonyl, pivaloyl, N-9-fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl, and fumaroyl.~~-~~

2. (original) The pharmaceutical agent of claim 1, wherein the carrier moiety comprises an aryl or alkyl group of sufficient length or steric bulk to protect the active peptide species from enzymatic degradation *in vivo*.

3. (canceled)

4. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical agent of claim 1, wherein The carrier moiety is chemically linked to a therapeutically active peptide species of the general formula aa_n, where n is an integer from 2 to 40.

5. (original) The pharmaceutical agent of claim 4, wherein the polypeptide is poorly absorbed orally.

6. (original) The pharmaceutical agent of claim 4, wherein n is an integer from 3 to 6.

7. (original) The pharmaceutical agent of claim 6, wherein n is 5.

8. (original) The pharmaceutical agent of claim 4, wherein the therapeutically active peptide species comprises Tyr-Gly-Gly-Phe-Met.

9. (canceled)

10. (canceled)

11. (canceled)

12. (canceled)

13. (canceled)

14.(canceled)

15. (canceled)

16. (original) A pharmaceutical composition for administration to a patient in need thereof comprising the pharmaceutical agent of claim 1, and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvants.

17. (original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 16, wherein the composition is formulated for oral administration.

18. (original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 16, wherein the composition is formulated for parenteral administration.

19. (original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 18, wherein the composition is formulated for intravenous administration.

20. (original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 16, wherein the composition releases a biologically active form of the pharmaceutical agent into the patient's system at physiologically effective levels over a period of time of up to twelve hours.

21. (original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 16, wherein the composition releases a biologically active form of the pharmaceutical agent into the patient's system at physiologically effective levels over a period of time of up to twenty-four hours.

22. (original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 18, wherein the peptide species is an epitope or an immune sequence characteristic of an infectious, viral or cancerous disease.

23. (withdrawn) A method for the treatment of a physiological condition through administration of a therapeutically effective species comprising the steps of chemically linking a therapeutic polypeptide of the general formula aa_n, where *aa* is an amino acid, and where *n* is an integer from 2 to 40, to an alkyl or aryl carrier moiety to form a pro-drug, and administering the pro-drug to a patient exhibiting the physiological condition.

24. (withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein the therapeutic polypeptide is poorly absorbed orally.

25. (withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein the carrier moiety is selected from the group comprising cinnamoyl, benzoyl, phenylacetyl, 3,4-methylenedioxycinnamoyl, 3,4,5-trimethoxycinnamoyl, t-butoxycarbonyl, benzyloxycarbonyl, pivaloyl, N-9-fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl, and fumaroyl

26. (withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein the pro-drug is administered orally or parenterally.

27. (withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein the therapeutic polypeptide is chemically linked to the carrier moiety through a linker species.